



Arizona Department of Gaming

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News Release

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Arizona Announces Crackdown on Illegal Gambling Machines

(Phoenix) – The Arizona Attorney General's Office and the Arizona Department of Gaming today announced a joint operation combating the proliferation of illegal gambling machines. A task force of agents and investigators from both offices seized more than 70 gambling machines known as Coin-Pushers at 57 metro Phoenix locations. The Arizona Department of Liquor and the Arizona Department of Public Safety actively assisted in the operation.

Coin-Pushers are machines into which a player inserts a coin(s), usually quarters, in an attempt to have a "pusher" (a moving part within the machine) push other coins, tokens, jewelry, and currency of various denominations off a shelf and into a collection bin for retrieval. Players are not guaranteed a return for their money, and any return depends on chance.

Most of the seized Coin-Pushers have been in operation since January 2010, and public complaints alerted officials. Affidavits filed in support of search and seizure warrants have estimated \$200,000 in illegal gambling revenue generated by the machines in the past five months. The affidavits explained that in addition to being illegal gambling devices, the machines are a fraud because they contain hidden compartments into which many coins fall without becoming available to the player, giving a false impression of the chances of getting more value than the cost of playing.

"These devices are a fraud on the public," Attorney General Terry Goddard said. "They are built cleverly to deceive the player into thinking that coins or other valuables are about to fall into the collection bin as winnings, but players can't see how they really work."

Distribution, installation and collection of revenue generated from the Coin-Pushers are violations of numerous criminal offenses that include promotion of gambling; fraud, money laundering, benefiting from gambling, and possession of a gambling device.

"Protecting our communities from illegal gambling operations is a priority," said Mark Brnovich, director of the Arizona Department of Gaming. "We take complaints of such activity very seriously." The Department's investigation is ongoing.

For more information or to request an interview with Director Brnovich, contact Rick Medina, Policy and Communications Manager of the Arizona Department of Gaming at (602) 604-1801, ext. 206.

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